The Only Sure Way to End Poverty, P. 2

Why Expecting Social Reform From Saigon Is Like Trying to Square The Circle

"The Administration is placing renewed hope on the possibility of a strengthened village pacification program in South Vietnam, tied in with Premier Ky's recent pledge to institute new, far-reaching domestic social reforms."

—New York Herald-Tribune *Feb. 5 on the Hawaii parley.*

"The Saigon government . . . is faced with an extremely difficult task, since the people most likely to be hurt by radical social reform are in charge of carrying it out. The U.S. is really asking nothing less than for the minority of Vietnamese who have run the country for centuries to share their wealth and political power with a peasantry they have always ignored or exploited."

—Richard Critchfield from Saigon in* Washington Star *Feb. 5 "U.S. Aid Keeps Making Vietnamese Rich Richer".

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Resort to Hula-Hula

The Honolulu meeting was a last-minute razzle-dazzle to distract attention from the rising opposition in the Senate to the war. Even so sedate a State Department reporter as Scripps-Howard's R. H. Shackford reported wryly from Hawaii, Feb. 8, "Many American participants have only vague ideas why they are here and what they are supposed to do." The most important news was underplayed—the warning by "a high U.S. official" that even if bombing raids on North Vietnam were increased to four times their present level, it would have "no major effect" on the military situation in the South (*New York Herald-Tribune,* Feb. 8). The high official, from all I can learn, was Secretary of Defense McNamara. The briefing was intended to counter demands for stepped-up bombing from that playboy Air Marshal and admirer of Adolf Hitler, Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, on whom we are about to center our new propaganda campaign—the "second front" we are opening up for a "new society" in Vietnam. This is the Great Society ploy extended to Southeast Asia.

Ky Hesitates on Land Reform

Just how seriously this can be taken is evident from the treatment of land reform, the central, urgent, inescapable and long postponed problem in winning the peasant. On this, as on other matters, the U.S. and its puppets could not agree. There had to be separate statements of purpose instead of a single joint communique. The separate statement by the U.S. pledges support "to measures of social revolution, including land reform." The separate South Vietnamese statement makes no mention of land reform. This is natural since its base lies in the landed gentry of the provinces and the absentee landlords in Saigon. The most we could get from the Saigon crowd was the inclusion in the joint communique of a cautious sentence, "Steps for more rapid land reform were carefully reviewed." Perhaps Ky and his associates take words too seriously. Our own highly advertised devotion to land reform in Latin America did not keep us from reversing it in Guatemala, fighting it in Cuba and applauding the overthrow of Goulart after he took the first timid steps toward it in Brazil. We can hardly expect the landlords of Saigon to be more ready to sacrifice their holdings than we have been to give up United Fruit's. Any day we side with the landless against the landed in South Vietnam the rebellion will collapse. But we don't think Ho Chi Minh need take too many sleeping pills worrying about its imminence.

So We Who Believed LBJ Are The Blind—Goldwater and Nixon The Men of Vision?

"There are special pleaders who counsel retreat in Vietnam. They belong to a group that has always been blind to experience and deaf to hope."

—Johnson arriving in Honolulu, Feb. 6.

"Do you mean Pope Paul? Do you mean Senators who believe Communism in Asia will not fall before weapons? Do you mean the millions of Americans who voted for you in 1964 when you counseled them against expanding and escalating the war into North Vietnam?"

—Senator Morse replying next day.

"I have had advice to load our planes with bombs and to drop them on certain areas that I think would escalate the war, and result in our committing a good many American boys to fighting a war that I think ought to be fought by the boys of Asia to help protect their own land."

—LBJ campaigning in Texas, Aug. 29, 1964, quoted by Morse, Feb. 7, 1966.

There is as wide a gap on the peace offensive. The U.S. statement—*but not Saigon's*—says "no path to peace shall be unexplored." The joint statement says both governments "note with regret the total absence of a present interest in peace on the part of the Government of North Vietnam." There is even less interest in Saigon. Ky won't even agree with Hanoi and Washington on a return to the 1954 Geneva agreement. He dismissed it in a Honolulu press conference as "just a cease-fire agreement" that the South, in any case, had never signed. (*Wash. Post,* Feb. 9). He also said flatly that he would "never" sit down at the conference table with the National Liberation Front. But just as the conference was getting underway, W. Averill Harriman was "signalling" to the other side a softening of our bargaining position. In an interview with UPI's audio network for release Feb. 7, Harriman said that the NLF could be represented at Geneva "As

(*Continued on Page Two*)

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This Fiscal Year It's Costing $400,000 Each to Kill A Viet Cong

(*Continued from Page One*)

part of the North Vietnamese delegation *or as an independent group who have an interest in the discussion*" (our italics) though not "as a government." This is the first time the U.S. has ever agreed to talk with the NLF as "an independent group". This concession may possibly explain why 24 hours later the North Vietnamese Consul General in New Delhi called attention to a postcript on Ho's Jan. 24 letter to India suggesting that as chairman of the 3-nation International Control Commission, India had a special responsibility for restoring peace. This possible hint of a readiness for Indian mediation is made the more interesting because of China's animosity to India. Ho risked Peking's anger.

What Hanoi Meant By "Sole"

There was another noteworthy point in that same interview —Harriman's interpretation of Ho's demand in the Jan. 24 letter that the NLF be recognized as "the sole representative" of the South Vietnamese people. The reporters questioning Harriman interpreted this as a "hardening" of Hanoi's position. Harriman saw it differently. "When I was in Moscow last July," he said, "the suggestions were we get hold of Hanoi; in the various talks that we had with different people, with Kosygin and others, get hold (sic)—talk to Hanoi. The finger of the world was pointed at Hanoi, and I think they suddenly realized that they were on the spot and they attempted to get away from the most embarrassing position, from their standpoint, by this letter of Ho Chi Minh, by which they point to the Viet Cong as the one with whom we should negotiate. *I think it was a device to get off the hot spot on which they found themselves.*" (Our italics.) This interprets the reference to mean that the NLF is "sole" representative in the sense that Hanoi, like Peking or Moscow, cannot talk for it. This may be read with the Hanoi Foreign Ministry memorandum broadcast Feb. 3. In discussing U.S. objection to the third of the four points, this memorandum interprets it to mean not "handing over" South Vietnam to the NLF (as the U.S. says) but building "a broad national democratic coalition government composed of representatives of all social strata, nationalities, parties, religious communities and patriotic personalities." This statement and Harriman's seem to offer hope for negotiation.

The Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings, from which Johnson grabbed the spotlight, show how little support he has for stepping up American involvement. Hickenlooper, Lausche and Symington seem to be the only Administration supporters not only on Vietnam but (as the Lincoln Gordon hearings showed) on Latin American policy. The hearings also demonstrated how ill informed most of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee members are even in this special field of their expertise. Two important statistics have so far come out of the hearings. Fulbright showed that at the current rate of expenditure it was costing us about $400,000 each for every Viet Cong we claimed to have killed. Gore observed that a Senate Public Works Committee report Dec. 1963 showed a $37 billion backlog of essential community needs in matters as vital as water supply and sewage. We are spending almost half that much, he pointed out, on the Vietnamese war in this fiscal year alone. Whether Great Society here or New Society there, it won't be built by war.

RFK's Initiative on Nuclear Weapons

We applaud Senator Robert F. Kennedy for an act of moral leadership in a speech to the New York Society of Newspaper Editors Feb. 7. He urged the U.S. to accept Premier Kosygin's proposal to the Geneva disarmament conference Feb. 3. This calls for a joint pledge by the nuclear powers not to use nuclear weapons against non-nuclear states which have no nuclear weapons on their territory. The official Washington reaction to this Soviet suggestion was cold. The U.S. has steadfastly refused to promise not to use nuclear weapons, or not to use them first. The State Dept. still regards the Bomb as a terroristic ace-in-the-hole with which to cow any adversary. This proved ineffective in practice even before our monopoly of the Bomb was broken, but the idea hangs on, fossilized, among the cliches of the Department. "We cannot expect other nations," Senator Kennedy said, "to forego the same club which we ourselves are unwilling to lay down." Indeed in the long run proliferation can be stopped only if the nuclear powers give up these weapons. The threat is too terrible for any nation to trust another's pledge.

The Biggest and Most Hopeful News of The Week Overshadowed By The War Madness

The most important news of the past week was not the first soft landing on the moon (another triumph of mere technology, with disturbing military implications) nor the press relations circus in Honolulu but the acceptance for the first time by a Presidential commission of the idea of government-guaranteed minimum subsistence for the poor. The idea of a "negative income tax" to provide a minimum income allowance has been kicking around for a generation. I remember my old editor, J. David Stern, advocating it 30 years ago in the Philadelphia Record and the New York Post as the one certain way to put a floor under poverty. Robert Theobold in recent years has been this idea's most eloquent and tireless advocate; see his Free Men and Free Markets (1963). To have it accepted by the National Commission on Technology, Automation and Economic Progress set up by the White House a year ago is an historic step forward. The income tax would be used as a direct equalizer, with the government collecting as it does now from the wealthy but paying out enough to the poor to raise their income to a guaranteed minimum.

If our minds, our news space, and our attention weren't so absorbed by fighting the insanity of the Vietnamese war, this report would be the No. 1 topic of discussion everywhere. A guarantee of minimum subsistence, swiftly implemented and set at an adequate level, would at one swoop eliminate a whole series of problems, or reduce them to minor proportions. Without such action, neither the Negro poor nor the disadvantaged youth can end their misery. The report warns that their high jobless rate will continue or even rise in the absence of drastic action. The tragic scenes of the past week in Mississippi, where "tractored out" Negro sharecroppers were denied temporary refuge even in idle military barracks could be made things of the past overnight. We hope the report, as soon as available in printed form, will be the subject of widespread debate and agitation.

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Revelations in Ramparts Magazine Show How We Turn The People Against Us

A Special Forces Veteran Lifts the Curtain on Its Repulsive Practices

The idea behind the Green Berets, the Army Special Forces, originated among the professional French soldiers captured in the earlier Indochina War. They came home impressed with what Ho Chi Minh and General Giap had done against superior firepower. They studied Mao Tse-tung and returned with the notion of applying Communist doctrine in reverse, to maintain the French colonial empire in North Africa. They trained themselves in conspiracy, "civic action", terrorism and psychological warfare; this was what they called *la guerre revolutionnaire*. Though there were idealists among them, as there are among our American practitioners of this doctrine, their tactics soon degenerated into Fascist-style torture and counter-terror. They failed to win the Algerians, and when de Gaulle decided to end the war and free Algeria, they turned their activities against the French Republic and tried to assassinate de Gaulle. Some of the most famous of these warriors are now fugitives from French justice, but their ideas are still regarded as gospel at Ft. Bragg, where Special Forces are trained.

Now Fugitives From Justice

This is the background against which to read the sensational memoirs of a Special Forces veteran in *Ramparts* Magazine for February (Menlo Park, Cal., 75¢). M. Sgt. Donald Duncan, who turned down a commission and a captaincy and left the army after 10 years of service, calls his article "The Whole Thing Was A Lie!" He describes his evolution from "militant anti-Communist" to the discovery that "it's not democracy we brought to Vietnam—it's anti-Communism." And "anti-Communism," he concludes, "is a lousy substitute for democracy." Finally, he wonders "whether Communism is spreading in spite of our involvement or because of it."

Duncan writes that he volunteered for Special Forces in 1959 out of militant anti-Communism, while serving with the Army in Germany. At Ft. Bragg, where he was sent for training, he found "a good percentage" of Special Forces were refugees from Communist countries whose "anti-Communism bordered on fanaticism."

Like their French counterparts, they studied Communist rather than democratic models. They learned NKVD methods of torture to extract information. "When teaching Special Forces how to set up guerrilla warfare in an enemy country," Duncan writes, "killing unpopular officials is pointed out as one method of gaining friends among the populace. It is recommended that special assassination teams be set up for this purpose." This is also Viet Cong tactics.

In Vietnam itself he came to see, "We weren't preserving freedom. There was no freedom to preserve. To voice opposition to the government meant jail or death. Neutralism was forbidden or punished . . . We aren't the freedom fighters. We are the Russian tanks blasting the hopes of an Asian Hungary."

The choice we offer is not between communism and democracy but between communism and anti-communism. "This is why most of them," Duncan says, "have embraced the Viet Cong. The people remember that when they were fighting the French for their national independence it was the Americans who helped the French. It's the American anti-Communist bombs that kill their children. It's American anti-Communism that has supported one dictator after another in Saigon. When anti-Communist napalm burns their children it matters little that an anti-Communist Special Forces medic comes later to apply bandages."

We recommend this article highly, not just for what it reveals from the inside about our operations in Vietnam but for the light it sheds on a cancerous growth inside our society. To train men in crime, to teach them cynically that the end justifies the means, to make professional conspirators of them is to breed at home the same anti-democratic menace that faced France in the wake of the Algerian settlement.

Castro and China

The relations between big states and small are not changed by ideology. There is not a single East European Communist state which has not learned this bitter lesson from experience. The Tito revolt, Nagy's execution, the Polish October and the liquidation of the Bulgarian Communist hero, Dimitrov, for daring to suggest a Balkan federation despite Russian disapproval are only the more obvious example of this axiom. Moscow has its own "Monroe Doctrine" in East Europe. Imperialism does not end with the abolition of capitalism. So it is not surprising to see conflict between Peking and Havana. Castro's complaint that China tried to "subvert" his military and officialdom recalls Tito's similar complaint against Stalin. Those who read into this dispute only an effort by Castro to please the Russians are, in my opinion, mistaken. Cuba's dignity and independence mean a great deal to Fidel, as he demonstrated in the missile crisis when he refused to allow the inspection on which Khrushchev had agreed with Kennedy, and got away with it. The full story of this quarrel with China is yet to be told. But if we were wise we would see the break as another opportunity to negotiate a settlement with Cuba and make it a friendly neighbor again instead of a hostile base on our doorstep.

The House Un-American Activities Committee and the Ku Klux Klan

"Mr. Speaker, this year the Un-American Activities Committee altered its role somewhat by attacking the far right instead of the far left. Admittedly the investigation of the Ku Klux Klan makes for a cloudier case against the committee, since there is a clear need for effective Federal legislation to deal with violence.

"But the proper forum in which to consider such legislation is the Judiciary Committee. The political beliefs of the Ku Klux Klan should not be the subject of a legislative investigation. . . .

"The goal of any investigation of the Klan should have been indelibly clear. It should be to come to grips with brutality and murder and to protect American citizens from acts of violence not from speech and propganda. The investigation by the Un-American Activities Committee has blurred this goal. After years of ignoring the Klan, that it is now, in the view of the committee, 'un-American' is irrelevant. The charge against the Klansmen is that they are murderers."

—Rep Wm. F. Ryan (D. N.Y.) *in the House Jan. 27.*

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The Revocation of Lynd's Passport—Moscow Lets A Critical Writer Out

4-Year Terms for Congress? The President Is Already Too Powerful

We disagree with most of the political scientists and agree with Chairman Celler of House Rules Committee in opposing the Johnson proposal for 4-year terms in the House of Representatives, to run concurrently with the President's. The power of the Presidency has grown so great, especially in making war, as to emphasize the danger of a rubber-stamp Congress swept into office on his coat-tails. If 4-year terms are to be adopted, the election should take place in the off-years between Presidential elections. The off-year elections give the country a chance to register disapproval if a President fails to keep his promises, as Johnson did in running as a peace candidate and then adopting much of Goldwater's policies in Vietnam. The only leverage the electorate now has against the war is Johnson's fear that it will cost him control of Congress in November . . .

The Eloquence of Empty Chairs

We are glad to hear that Prof. Staughton Lynd has been invited to a "teach-in" on Vietnam in Norway April 16 and another in England at Eastertime. We hope there will be more such invitations from abroad to dramatize, by an empty chair, the Iron Curtain the U.S.—alone of all the free nations—imposes on the travel of its citizens. Empty chairs around the world would effectively protest the withdrawal of passports from Lynd and his companions to Hanoi, and from Christopher Koch and his on an earlier trip last Fall. All through the years from 1917 to 1933 when we had no diplomatic relations with Russia, Americans travelled freely there. These new restrictions on North Vietnam, China, North Korea, Albania and Cuba are a post World War II development, in which our bureaucracy has taken over the bad habits of the Soviet Union's, in restricting travel for political reasons. The Supreme Court has struck down personal restrictions but not restrictions by country or area. The Lynd case may provide a new test with more success . . .

While we're on the subject, we're also glad to see that the U.S.S.R. has given Valery Tarsis permission to deliver a series of lectures in Britain but find it offensive that the price he had to pay was to denounce two other writers facing trial for doing what he himself did—find creative freedom by publishing abroad. His book "Ward 7" was published in England and is more deeply critical than the works for which Sinyavsky and Daniel are soon to stand trial. The Tarsis trip is no doubt intended to offset world-wide condemnation of the writers' trial, but the price exacted from Tarsis is so ignominious that it will undercut the purpose. Tarsis illustrates a new post-Stalin method for dealing with non-conformist writers—locking them up in insane asylums. That's what "Ward 7" is about. Forty-nine French, German, Italian, American and British writers in a letter to the London *Times* Aug. 31 protested the forthcoming trials. The London *Times* next day published a fascinating account by Max Hayward of difficulties encountered by Soviet writers. He reported the arrest last summer in Leningrad of a group of intellectuals for publishing an underground magazine called "The Bell". The name was taken from the famous publication with which the Russian liberal Herzen waged war from exile in London a century ago on the Czarist regime. *Plus ca change . . .*

The Price of Keeping The Negro Down

"The economic cost of discrimination becomes most evident when there is near full employment of white labor. If economic and social policies could be specifically designed to lower Negro unemployment to the current unemployment level of whites, the resulting gain in GNP (Gross National Product) would be $5 billion . . . National output can be further expanded by improving the average level of productivity. Education and training are two means to this end. If the average productivity of the Negro and white laborers were equalized at the white level, total production would expand by $22 billion. If both unemployment rates and productivity levels were equalized, the total output of the economy would rise by about $27 billion . . . This is a measure of the annual economic loss as a result of discrimination. Of course, to achieve this increase in output, some resources would have to be devoted to investment in the human capital of America's Negro citizens. This would be an investment yielding important economic as well as social returns for the entire nation."

—Latest annual report to Congress of the President's Council of Economic Advisers, Jan. 27, 1966.

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